



GLOBAL FORUM on MSM & HIV *Working worldwide against HIV for the health and human rights of men who have sex with men*

Pre-conference Satellite on MSM and HIV Report 2008 International AIDS Conference Mexico City

The Global Forum on MSM and HIV (MSMGF) held its third consecutive International AIDS Conference affiliated satellite event devoted to MSM and HIV in Mexico City August 1-2, 2008. The brain child of Forum co-founder and Executive Director of the Australian Federation of AIDS Organizations, Don Baxter, the first pre-conference satellite event on MSM was held in Bangkok at the 2004 International AIDS Conference. That event attracted 100 people.

Forum co-founder John Maxwell of AIDS Committee Toronto took the lead in helping to produce the second MSM affiliated satellite at the 2006 International AIDS Conference. That event attracted 300 people – and was the Forum’s official birthplace.

The 2008 affiliated satellite event on MSM and HIV in Mexico City attracted 419 attendees, from 71 countries, representing more than 250 organizations worldwide. 39% of the attendees were from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Central America, Eastern Europe, Mexico, Oceania (not including Australia) and South America. Specifically, there were 58 delegates from 12 countries in Africa, 54 delegates from 13 countries in Asia and the Pacific, 47 delegates from 8 countries in South America, 13 delegates from 7 countries in the Caribbean, 18 delegates from 5 countries in Central America, 14 delegates from 7 countries in Eastern Europe, and 2 delegates from the Middle East and Central Asia. Participants came from as far away as Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka and Laos - from Burkina, Mali, and Morocco – from Poland, Estonia, and Kazakhstan – from Ecuador, Chile and Suriname – from Nicaragua, Guyana and Mexico (see *2008 MSM Pre-Conference Demographics*).

The significance of 2008 pre-conference affiliated event cannot be understated. It represented an opportunity for gay men, other men who have sex with men, and allies to network, share information, and re-energize themselves for the advocacy and organizing work waiting for them back at home (see *2008 Pre-Conference Evaluation Analysis*). The affiliated event itself was intended as a powerful statement about the importance of a global MSM collective voice.

Sadly, MSM issues remain under-represented at large international gatherings and conferences on HIV/AIDS. Even when epidemiologic and behavioral research indisputably supports prioritizing MSM, there is often a shameful neglect of MSM needs in discussions about policy, programs, and resources that is sometimes expressed through silence, denial or explicit exclusion. Inadequate representation of gay men and other men who have sex with men in planning processes at all levels fuel the widening disparity in resources devoted to programs and services MSM continue to experience at the local and regional levels.

This year’s affiliated event was devoted to a critical examination of how insufficient global research on HIV and MSM contributes to a dearth of HIV prevention, treatment and care resources targeting our unique needs. The program was bold and ambitious as reflected by the depth and breadth of topics and in the impressive roster of researchers, community-based experts and human rights advocates who presented their work at the gathering. The program along with podcasts audio recordings, text documents, and power point slides from all the main



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plenary talks and workshop presentations are available on the MSMGF newly re-build website – (see www.msmandhiv.org). The MSMGF has also made available on our website all MSM or sexual minority-related IAC abstracts, indexed by region of the world.

In addition to producing the MSM pre-conference satellite event, the MSMGF produced a document entitled, *The Pink Pages*. *The Pink Pages* was an extrapolation of all MSM related activities and presentations from the larger 2008 International AIDS Conference program. The MSMGF produced *The Pink Pages* as a courtesy to attendees interested in MSM themed program events and as a strategy for facilitating MSM networking. *The Pink Pages* was subsequently used by the International AIDS Society (IAS) as the official “MSM roadmap” to the conference.

Last, with strong in-kind support from AIDS Project Los Angeles (APLA – home to the MSMGF secretariat), the Australian Federation of AIDS Organizations (AFAO), and IAS, the MSMGF executed an ambitious media strategy which met with great success. Included in the media approach was a joint press conference held on August 6, 2008 with the IAS on MSM and HIV with a focus on MSM issues in the global south. Below are links to earned media coverage that we have been able to track to date:

In LA Magazine

http://www.inlamagazine.com/1114/special_reports/sprt1.html

(Features MSMGF Co-Chair Robert Carr)

The Advocate

http://www.advocate.com/news_detail_ektid59182.asp

Bay Area Reporter (LGBT paper in San Francisco)

<http://www.ebar.com/news/article.php?sec=news&article=3214>

(Features quote from MSMGF Steering Committee Member Shivananda Khan)

Carib World Newswire

http://www.caribbeanworldnews.com/middle_top_news_detail.php?mid=1204

(Features quote from Robert Carr)

Globe & Mail (Canada's national daily newspaper)

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/RTGAM.20080806.waids07/BNStory/National>

(Features quotes from Robert Carr and Craig McClure)

National Public Radio

“Morning Edition” aired the Brenda Wilson story on violence among MSM in Jamaica this morning (8/8)

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=93408983>

(Features interviews with Robert Carr and an unidentified gay, HIV-positive man from Jamaica who was twice the victim of violence)



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AIDS2008.com

<http://www.aids2008.com/blog/gay-does-not-always-translate>

HIV and Hepatitis.com

http://www.hivandhepatitis.com/2008icr/AIDS2008/docs/080808_d.html

Healthdev.net

<http://healthdev.net/site/post.php?s=3263>

Southern Africa HIV and AIDS Information Service

<http://www.safaids.net/?q=node/554>

Africa Science News Service

http://africasciencenews.org/asns/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=600&Itemid=1

Voice of America

<http://www.voanews.com/english/2008-08-06-voa65.cfm>

Washington Post (page A 2)

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/08/06/AR2008080602940.html?sid=ST2008080602996&pos=>
(Features quotes from Craig McClure and Shivananda Khan)

El Mañana

<http://www.elmanana.com.mx/notas.asp?id=70863>

Excelsior

http://www.exonline.com.mx/diario/noticia/primera/pulsonacional/dar_acceso_a_la_salud_a_hombres_que_tienen_sex0_con_hombres/304490

Vanguardia

http://www.vanguardia.com.mx/diario/noticia/salud/vidayarte/sexo_entre_hombres_causa_mas_contagios_del_vih/203009

El Sendero del Peje

<http://senderodelpeje.com/sdp/contenido/2008/08/02/11932>

Aegis

<http://www.aegis.org/news/un aids/2008/UN080720.html>

AIDS2008.com

<http://www.aids2008.com/blog/waving-flag-gay-men-everywhere>

The Body.com

<http://www.thebody.com/content/art47492.html>



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UNAIDS

(Home page)

http://www.unaids.org/en/AboutUNAIDS/Leadership/EXD/Photo_gallery/2008/2008AIDS_Prec_onference_MSM_Mexico.asp

(Feature story)

http://www.unaids.org/en/KnowledgeCentre/Resources/FeatureStories/archive/2008/20080731_MSM_and_Global_HIV_epi.asp

Adonis (LGBT Mexican publication)

<http://anodis.com/nota/12387.asp>

Aidsmap

<http://www.aidsmap.com/en/news/EFF8CFC9-B743-4231-BBAE-7565F7F56F86.asp>

AIDS Committee of Toronto

<http://216.234.52.150/>

AIDS 2008 Community Blog (on Piot and homophobia)

<http://www.aids2008.com/blog/battling-homophobia-key-ending-aids-worldwide>

AIDS 2008 Community Blog (On Corpus Breakout Session)

<http://www.aids2008.com/blog/i-heart-patos-corpus>

El Sol de Mexico

<http://www.oem.com.mx/elsoldecuautla/notas/n797953.htm>

(Story appears on page A7 of the Sunday paper).

La Jornada

<http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2008/08/02/index.php?section=sociedad&article=037n3soc>

Producing the pre-conference affiliated event was no small undertaking. Months of planning, and dozens of individuals from around the world were involved, including the members of the Global Forum's steering committee, who were each active satellite implementers. They included Executive Committee members:

Don Baxter, Australia, Co-chair
Robert Carr, Jamaica, Co-chair
Juan Jacóbo Hernández, México, Co-chair
Joel Nana, South Africa & Cameroon, Co-chair
Tudor Kovacs, Romania
John Maxwell, Canada
Leonardo Sanchez, Dominican Republic



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As well as Steering Committee members:

Jack Arayawongchai, Thailand
Aditya Bondhyopadhyay, India
Richard Burzynski, Canada
Gus Cairns, United Kingdom
Carlos García de León, México
Norman Gutiérrez, Nicaragua
Shivananda Khan, India
Zhen Li, China
Samuel Matsikure, Zimbabwe
Steave Nemande, Cameroon
Paul Semugoma, Uganda
Jeffrey Stanton, formerly representing ASICAL

The MSMGF used funding support from UNAIDS to support scholarship support and other costs associated with producing the pre-conference satellite. Other funding partners included:

Aids Fonds the Netherlands and HIVOS (which have each pledge multi-year support to the MSMGF)
AIDS Project Los Angeles (APLA) (home to the MSMGF Secretariat)
Australian Federation of AIDS Organizations
Aus AID
Constella Futures
Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC)
International AIDS Society (IAS)
International Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Commission
International HIV/AIDS Alliance
Open Society Institute (OSI/SHARP)
San Francisco AIDS Foundation (SFAF)
amfAR

The MSMGF is proud of its many significant accomplishments in its short two year history. The MSMGF is using the success of and momentum created at the 2008 pre-conference MSM satellite event to begin planning advocacy, information exchange and networking opportunities at future events. For example, the steering committee of the MSMGF is planning to reconvene in Amsterdam, January 2009 for a strategic planning session designed to refine the organization's governance, re-articulate its advocacy priorities, and establish performance indicators for the next 3 to 5 years.